

# 2007 discharge: European Environment Agency EEA

2008/2259(DEC) - 23/04/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a decision concerning the discharge to be granted to the Director of the European Environment Agency in respect of the implementation of the Agency's budget for the financial year 2007. The decision to grant discharge is also an approval of the closure of the accounts of this EU agency.

In parallel, the European Parliament adopted by 407 votes to 7, with 17 abstentions, a resolution with observations which are an integral part of the decision to grant discharge.

Parliament considers that the Agency should:

- continue its efforts to further develop its communication methods in order to attract more media coverage for its findings and thus feed public debate on important environmental issues, such as climate change, biodiversity and the management of natural resources;
- provide support for policy-making by further developing its work in the field of environmental impact assessment.

As regards **recruitment procedures**, Parliament regrets the fact that the European Court of Auditors (ECA) identified problems of transparency and discrimination. Noting the Agency's responses on this issue, Parliament welcomes the Agency's promise to modify its approach to recruitment.

On the issue of **procurement procedures**, Parliament regrets the direct award of certain services. MEPs consider the Agency's reply to be unsatisfactory and call on it to ensure full compliance with procurement rules.

In relation to the **management of grant agreements** with European Topic Centres (which, according to the ECA, were not sufficiently monitored), Parliament is satisfied with the Agency's reply but notes that the grant agreements between the Agency and the European Topic Centres provide for a flat rate of 20% of direct expenditure for their indirect expenditure (overheads), whereas the implementing rules of the Financial Regulation limit this rate to 7%. Parliament therefore welcomes the Agency's commitment to sort out this situation in 2009/2010.

In relation to **follow-up to previous discharge exercises**, Parliament recalls its request that the Agency, before 1 January 2010 and every five years thereafter, commission an independent external evaluation of its achievements on the basis of its founding regulation and the work programme decided upon by the Management Board. Moreover, it calls on the Agency to inform the discharge authority of the results of the external evaluation. At the same time, Parliament regrets that, according to the data provided in the Agency's annual report, the situation with regard to balance in, and diversity of, staff did not improve significantly in 2007, as one third of staff are still of a single nationality. It therefore calls on the Agency to step up its efforts to improve the balance in, and diversity of, staff.

Lastly, noting that the Agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2007 are reliable, and the underlying transactions are legal and regular, the Parliament approves the closure of its accounts and refers, for other observations accompanying its decision on discharge, to its resolution on financial management and control of EU agencies - see [2008/2207\(INI\)](#) - adopted in parallel.